



# Middle Passage Ceremonies & Port Markers Project, Inc.

*Remembering Ancestors*

October 25, 2021

National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission  
Attention Beth Porter, Secretary

Dear Commission Members:

The **Middle Passage Ceremonies and Port Markers Project (MPCPMP)** is aware that the deadline for public comment to HR 4009 has passed; however, Sophia Kelly of the National Park Service encouraged us to go on record. **MPCPMP** is in support of the Georgetown Waterfront Enslaved Voyages Act introduced by Congresswoman Eleanor Norton and spearheaded by Andrena Crockett of the Georgetown African American Historic Landmark Project and Tour. Established in 2011, **MPCPMP** is a national non-profit organization that gathers information and encourages the commemoration of captive African children, women, and men who endured the trans-Atlantic voyage to U.S. territory. That history is shared by 52 documented arrival locations along the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts, and three islands in the Caribbean – Puerto Rico, St. Croix, and St. Thomas. Many of these places have conducted ancestral remembrance ceremonies, installed historical markers, and 43 are designated by the UNESCO Slave Route Project as a Site of Memory.

Even though much of the research on the trans-Atlantic trade is available and continues, especially by the *Voyages Consortium*, for centuries, other than commercial interests, identifying detailed maritime information related to the trans-Atlantic human trade has not been a priority. After watching the Commission's meeting, recorded October 5, 2021, we wish, first, to support the creation of a national memorial that commemorates the Africans and their descendants who were impacted by the trans-Atlantic human trade and enslavement in this country. A national memorial to publicly address this history is imperative. Fittingly, it should be placed at the waterfront in the nation's capital.

Additionally, we endorse its location to be the Port of Georgetown, regardless of available data confirming Georgetown as a specific documented Middle Passage site. This history of the arrival, presence, and contributions of Africans is undeniable. Georgetown is a part of the District of Columbia and was incorporated into the city of Washington, D.C. more than a century ago. To broaden and connect its relevance to the local and national narrative is another step toward truth-telling and healing. If, as suggested by several Commission members, the language in HR4009 is amended to clearly reflect its purpose as a national memorial to commemorate captive Africans – those who perished and those who survived the Middle Passage – we applaud this action.

Thank you.

Ann Chinn, Board Chair

**Executive Director**  
Ann C. Cobb

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